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ABSTRACT

This booklet lists ways that parents; employers; teachers, administrators, and principals; and grandparents, neighbors, and concerned citizens can help America reach the National Educational Goals. First, the booklet summarizes the National Educational Goals in the areas of school readiness; school completion; student achievement and citizenship; mathematics and science; adult literacy and lifelong learning; safe, disciplined, and alcohol- and drug-free schools; teacher education and professional development; and parent participation. Next, 19 specific activities for parents are listed in the areas of "Expect Everyone To Read," "Expect Hard Work," "Expect More," and "Expect Learning To Be a Round-the-Clock Endeavor." The next section lists nine ways that employers can support education under the headings of "Expect Good Students To Make Better Workers," "Expect Good Parents To Make Better Workers," and "Help Schools and Kids Expect More." The 12 recommendations for teachers, administrators, and principals fall in the categories of "Expect More," "Expect Everyone To Get into the Act," and "Be a Part of a Teaching and Learning Community." Finally, 10 ways are recommended in which grandparents, neighbors, and concerned citizens can raise the expectations of children, parents, and school officials. (AC)

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Moving America To The Head Of The Class

50 SIMPLE THINGS YOU CAN DO

PS 022956

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keep the PROMISE®

EDUCATION EXCELLENCE PARTNERSHIP

KEEP THE PROMISE

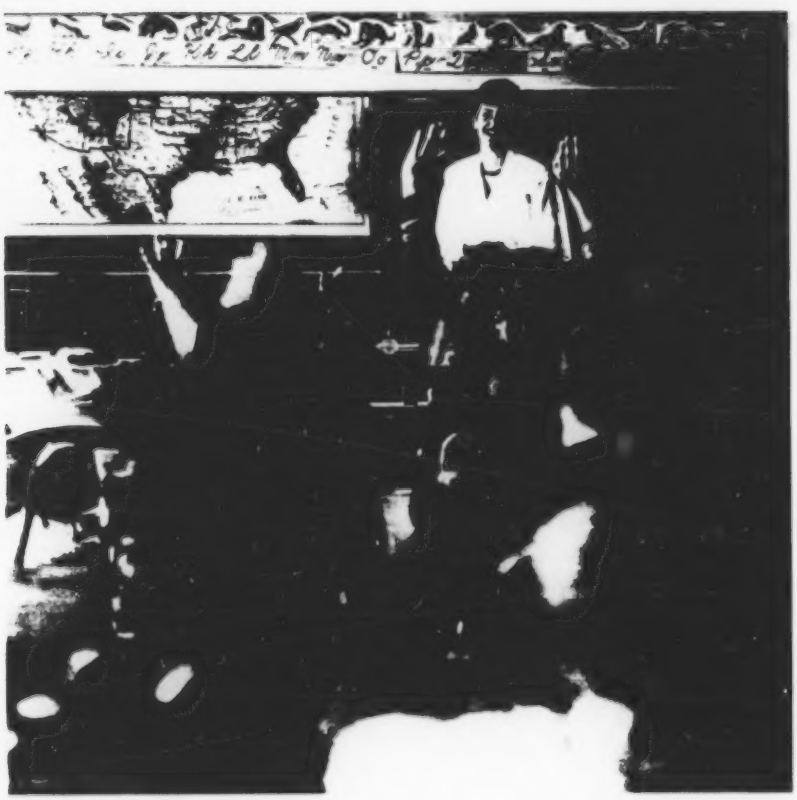
We have joined together to reach the goals listed on the next two pages and to move America to the head of the class.

You can help.

In this booklet, you'll find simple things you can do to help America reach these important education goals.

To keep the promise for the future of America.

For the future of our children.



THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS

BY THE YEAR 2000:

■ **SCHOOL READINESS:**
All children in America will start school ready to learn.

■ **SCHOOL COMPLETION:**
The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

■ **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND CITIZENSHIP:**
American students will leave grades 4, 8 and 12 having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter—including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, the arts, history and geography. They will leave school prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning and productive employment.

■ **MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE:**
U.S. students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.

■ **ADULT LITERACY AND LIFELONG LEARNING:**
Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

■ SAFE, DISCIPLINED,
AND ALCOHOL- AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS:
Every school in the United States will be free of drugs, alcohol, violence and firearms, and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

■ TEACHER EDUCATION
AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
The nation's teachers will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION:
Every school will support partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional and academic growth of children.

EXPECT EVERYONE TO READ

1

☐ ***Read to preschool children at least 20 minutes a day. Or have older children read to you.***

Make reading a natural part of their daily routine.

2

☐ ***Keep good books, magazines and newspapers in the house.***

Make it easy—both for adults and children—to find something interesting to read.

3

☐ ***Add to your children's enjoyment of reading by discussing each book they read.***

It helps them learn to express themselves. You'll enjoy the conversations, too.

4

☐ ***Make sure your children see <u>you</u> read for at least 20 minutes a day.***

Remember, you're their primary role model.

5

☐ ***If you have difficulty reading, tell your children stories.***

Hearing about their grandparents, your family history and your own experiences will be interesting and rewarding for your children, and will help them develop an appreciation of language, storytelling and the past.

6

☐ ***Limit your kids' TV viewing to no more than two hours a day.***

Studies show that while a little bit of television viewing every day is okay, excessive time at the set is directly linked to poor school performance.

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Know what kind of homework is expected from teachers, and make sure children complete it.

The more involved you are, the more involved your children will be.

8

Provide your children with a regular, quiet place where they can do homework.

Don't make it hard for them to find a place to work. Set up a place with few distractions, but close enough so they can ask you questions.

9

Expect every child—not just those considered bright—to take tough academic courses.

In an increasingly complex world, all our children should be prepared to meet the challenges they will encounter. Advanced math, science, English, history, arts and foreign language courses—and other classes that require students to write papers—provide the kind of background they will need.

10

Demonstrate your own commitment to high standards. Don't ask teachers to give your kids grades or promotions they haven't earned.

The goal is a good education, not a good report card.

11

Support school efforts to develop and maintain rules for student discipline.

Children thrive in an environment where they know what is expected of them.

12

☐ ***Familiarize yourself with the eight National Education Goals at the front of this booklet.***

These goals are simple, straightforward and very important. Find out what your schools are doing to reach them.

☐ ***Find out whether your school has standards or clear expectations for its students.***

Ask what children should know by the fourth grade in math. By the eighth grade. And by graduation. What about in history? English? Science? Make sure your children are acquiring the skills and knowledge they need.

14

☐ ***Challenge the notion that your school is one of the "better" ones. Chances are it's still academically inferior to the schools of many other industrialized nations.***

Support teachers, principals and superintendents who want to make improvements.

15

☐ ***Understand that you may have to make some sacrifices in your effort to improve your school.***

Show the school faculty and administration that you're willing to put your time into meetings, research, discussions—whatever it takes to improve your school. Join or start a local Parent Teacher Association.

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16

☐ ***Don't accept hearsay about the quality of a school system.***
Ask for real data and information about student performance and progress. Find out if advanced courses are offered, and whether students have additional learning opportunities before and after school and during summers. Look for signs that the community supports the school district.

EXPECT LEARNING TO BE A ROUND-THE-CLOCK ENDEAVOR

17

☐ ***Help interest your child in learning outside of the school day.***
Find out about after-school and summer programs in your community. If they don't exist, help start them.

☐ ***Encourage schools and community groups to develop partnerships to support students who want or need more learning time beyond the regular school day and year.***
There may not be enough hours in the average school day to support excellence. Setting up additional time for structured learning can give students more opportunities to master tough subjects.

19

☐ ***If at all possible, follow the advice of many experts and don't let your children work at a part-time job more than 15-20 hours a week during the school year.***
Recognize that study time and homework will result in far greater earning power over the long-term than a part-time job.

EXPECT GOOD STUDENTS TO MAKE BETTER WORKERS

20

☐ ***Ask to see school transcripts when hiring young people.***

Demonstrate that working hard and doing well in school counts — even when it comes time to apply for an after-school or part-time job.

21

☐ ***Hire kids who take tough courses such as advanced math, science, English, history, a foreign language, arts and other courses that require writing.***

Let the world know you respect and appreciate people who are not afraid to challenge themselves.

22

☐ ***Provide bonuses or raises for students who have outstanding academic records or good attendance.***

The extra encouragement will reinforce their motivation.

EXPECT GOOD PARENTS TO MAKE BETTER WORKERS

☐ ***Don't make it difficult for parents to attend parent conferences and other significant school activities during the school day.***

Supporting your employees in this way will pay off in the long run for you, for your employees and for the country.

24

☐ ***Highlight the involvement of parents and employees in your internal and external communication.***

Showcase your employees' participation as school volunteers, tutors, guest speakers or school-to-work facilitators.

HELP SCHOOLS AND KIDS EXPECT MORE

25

☐ ***Help school teachers and administrators understand that the ability to think, write and reason clearly—and the ability to solve problems—are the skills that employers seek.***

Make it clear how important it is to you that graduates coming into the workforce have these skills—skills that are honed and refined through tough academic courses.

26

☐ ***Ask your local schools how you can help them raise their academic standards to meet the eight National Education Goals.***

One way is to serve on your local school improvement team. Educators need to know that you're behind their efforts. They will appreciate all your support and assistance.

27

☐ ***Provide opportunities for students and their teachers to visit the workplace or get actual work experience.***

This will help students understand the demands that will be placed upon them one day.

28

☐ ***Donate equipment, expertise or money toward raising your school's standards.***

Ask your local principals and teachers what they need.

EXPECT MORE

29

☐ ***Learn more about the National Education Goals.***

Post the eight National Education Goals where your colleagues and students can see them.

30

☐ ***Talk to your colleagues about goals and academic standards.***

A vision becomes more powerful when it is shared. You can make a valuable contribution to your school improvement effort simply by sharing your ideas.

31

☐ ***Discuss the reasons we need higher academic standards with your students and their parents.***

Make them a part of this ongoing effort. Parents need to understand your commitment. Students who feel they have a stake in the new academic standards will work harder, perform better.

32

☐ ***Set high standards for yourself.***

Continue to develop professionally throughout your career. Your attitude and example will speak volumes.

☐ ***Make the success of every student your top priority.***

The quiet child in the back of the room may be the one who needs you the most.

TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS, PRINCIPALS

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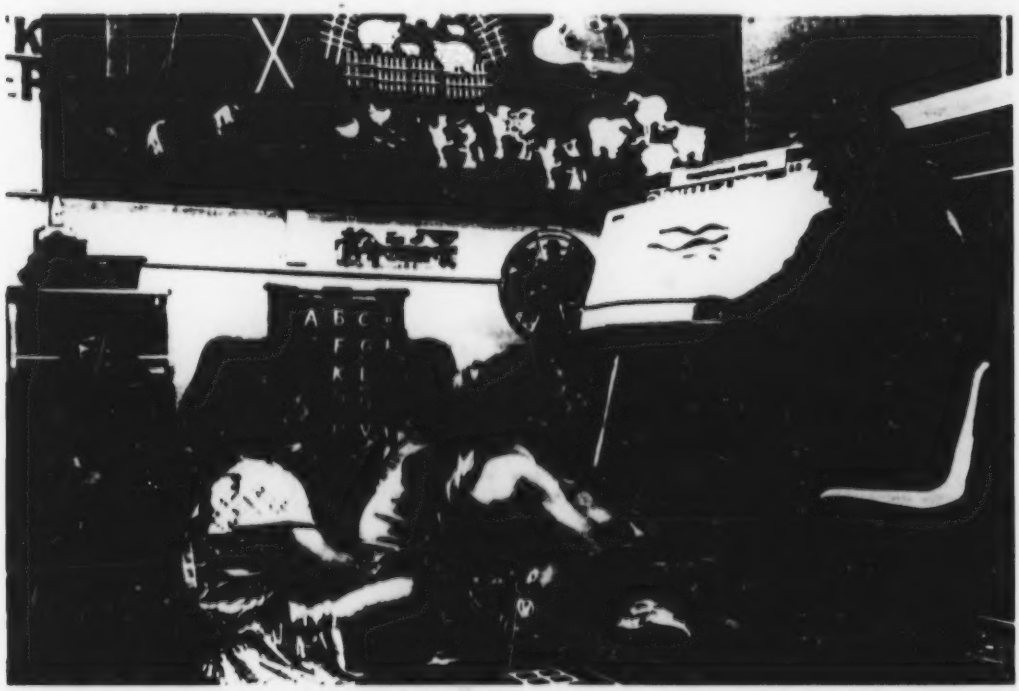
34

☐ ***Network with other teachers and principals in your district and elsewhere about how to teach diverse students.***

Finding out what works for other teachers can help you be more effective.



EXPECT EVERYONE TO GET INTO THE ACT

35

☐ ***Work with your colleagues to assess whether your school's curriculum and instructional practices meet world-class standards.***

Standards of comparable rigor are routinely met and exceeded by the schools of other industrialized nations.

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36

Work with parents and community leaders to develop plans and build support for school improvement efforts.

Try to be specific about how they can help.

37

Help students and their parents understand why it's so important that all students take tough courses.

Be sure they know that children who successfully tackle tough courses (e.g. math, sciences, languages) have far greater earning power throughout their lives.

Be part of your school district's improvement efforts.

Check to see if your district is participating in the Goals 2000: Educate America program or in similar state and local efforts.

BE A PART OF A TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMUNITY

39

☐ ***Work with others in your school and district to consider how best to use existing resources to help students meet high academic standards.***

Make it a priority. And if the existing resources aren't enough, start looking into innovative ways to improve the situation.

40

☐ ***Seek to make your school a family and community learning center.***

Work with your local colleges, universities, businesses, and arts or nonprofit organizations to develop before- and after-school programs for students and families.

RAISE THE EXPECTATIONS OF CHILDREN, PARENTS AND SCHOOL OFFICIALS

41

☐ ***Keep up with the education news in your local paper.***
It's an important way to stay involved, and it requires very little time.

42

☐ ***Volunteer to work in your local school as a tutor or mentor.***
You'll be surprised how satisfying it can be.

☐ ***Help give children the right start.***
Support social services like school breakfast programs and outreach programs that increase the likelihood that all children will arrive at school ready to learn.

44

☐ ***Become a champion for children and for education improvement.***
Set an example. Then prod neighbors, friends and family to get into the act with you.

45

☐ ***Evaluate every elected official's track record in support of higher standards and better schools.***
Make political leaders keep their promises about improving education.

46

☐ ***Don't stop supporting your schools when your children are finished with their education.***
The future of your community and your nation depends on people like you.

47

☐ ***Take an active interest in the schoolwork of children you know.***

You can be a significant source of encouragement and support to nieces, nephews, grandchildren...even neighbors.

☐ ***Our nation is full of resources. Help children learn how to use them effectively.***

Get children in touch with community youth groups, mentors, libraries, colleges and school clubs. Let them know about organized recreation and arts and science programs. If they don't exist, help set up after-school and summer tutoring centers.

49

☐ ***Attend your local school board meetings.***

Don't assume that others know more about how to run a school. Find out for yourself what's going on.

50

☐ ***Be supportive of local school, community and state efforts to meet high academic standards and the eight National Education Goals.***

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